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Several years ago, at a well attended meeting of a large Classical Association, that theme which, like the poor, we have always with us, the audacious and unwarrantable tyranny which leads the Colleges to dictate to the Schools what the Schools shall do, received much, not to say heated, attention. I listened to the discussion till listening had become well nigh impossible, so that I was on the point of rising to defend the right of the Colleges to set the standards for admission (in spite of the fact that over and over it has been declared that no college instructor understands in the slightest degree the problems of the Schools). Just then a man powerful alike in physique and voice rose and declared that if the teachers in the Schools would for only five years stop talking about the College entrance requirements and devote the energy thus saved to preparing their students properly there would never again be need to speak of the tyranny of the Colleges.

This scene came back forcibly to my mind some time ago, under the following circumstances. I had, for certain reasons, sent out letters to various teachers in the High Schools of New York City, asking them whether they thought it worth while to seek to arrange an irreducible minimum of work to be covered in First Year Latin. One of the replies was so interesting to me, and seemed so full of suggestiveness for all teachers of Latin that I wrote to the author—Mr. Charles E. Dixon, of the Eastern District High School, Brooklyn—for permission to use the pertinent parts of it in an editorial in *The Classical Weekly*. Coming as they do from a teacher in one of the High Schools of New York City—which, we have been repeatedly assured, suffer from peculiarly trying conditions—Mr. Dixon's utterances are most inspiring. He says:

Allow me first to say that there is no work in the Latin course which gives me greater pleasure to teach than the work of the first year, provided the class is one of at least average ability. The growth in knowledge of the beginning Latin pupil is so rapid and so easily marked that it is a daily joy to add to it and to measure it.

It makes little difference to me which one of a dozen good Beginners' Books I use. My method is practically the same with them all. I try to have the young people make practically a clean sweep and, with an occasional exception here and there in the case of matters that do not commend themselves to my judgment, learn everything from the beginning of the first declension to the end of the book. I give the lessons from day to day thus: "Take to such

and such a paragraph from the beginning of the book. You will be expected to know the advance lesson and everything I have ever taught you". Nearly every day for the greater part of the first term we review almost everything we have had, each succeeding day with increased speed—at the beginning of the recitation—all the model nouns and adjectives and verbs and pronouns. It is surprising how much can be done in a few minutes by the watch. I say to one student, "Give all the model nouns that we have studied"; to another, "Give the inflection of all the model verbs"; etc. Sometimes I hold the watch and see how long it takes to give them. In this way the students get a sure and facile knowledge of their forms. Nothing short of perfect accuracy and a high rate of speed is accepted as satisfactory. This sort of thing, with a perfect knowledge of the vocabularies, is insisted on daily. I tell them that the most important thing is the matter of vocabulary, the next inflection, the next syntax, but they must know everything that they have studied in the book. Proper pronunciation is insisted on and no mispronunciation is allowed to pass uncorrected. A student who shows lack of preparation is detained after school till the deficiency is made good. He is detained the same day that he shows the lack of preparation. That keeps the pupil up to the mark in almost all cases. When I find, as I sometimes do, that a student plainly lacks the ability, I do not make his life a burden, but let him do the best he can and take it over the next term. But I find but few such cases. When they come to me after school I try to have them have a good time and feel that they are really getting something worth while, and not undergoing punishment. When they get this impression, they are not loath to come. Some come without being asked. This is my method, and it works.

As to the "irreducible minimum", I am not very anxious to find it. I believe in taking a good sensible book—and there is a goodly number of them—and teaching it with all my might. What is in it must be learned. The words must be learned, the inflections must be learned, the little syntax that is in the ordinary Beginner's Book must be learned. Most of our trouble lies in a lack of live, enthusiastic, insistent teaching. Latin can never be made easy. I believe that many first year books now in use are good enough. All we teachers have to do is to teach them with spirit, with devotion, with kindness, and, if necessary, with a firmness and energy that compel response on the part of indifferent or shirking students. In my classes I am more interested in the maximum than in the minimum. In my teaching I try to see to it that the student understands syntactically whatever he reads. I do not believe in sugar-coating everything or feeding them with a spoon.

The student should do his first book thoroughly. Then he should begin to read, and should make practically a clean sweep there. I do not know any point of Latin syntax that comes in the High School

course that a skilful teacher can not briefly present so as to reach the understanding of the average student. Take the subject of conditions—the whole subject, exclusive of conditions in indirect discourse. The whole thing can be made clear in ten minutes by a skilful instructor. If the student forgets, then, of course, it must be done over again. Constant, everlasting, and speedy review, *review* is the secret, if indeed, there is any secret about it. I do not believe in reserving this for the second year and this for the third year and this for the fourth year—at least not to the extent to which many others seem to believe in it. We are getting things down too fine. Of course the simpler things must be taught first and must be dwelt on to the partial, but not to the total, exclusion of other things. I believe in a bolder attack than is frequently made on Latin syntax.

One point which I will mention will probably surprise—perhaps shock—you. I should not much care if my students had no Grammar at all, except for reviewing forms. I do almost all of this work in class. They get most of their syntax from oral teaching.

I do not sympathize with the constant reduction of requirements in Latin study in our schools and with the doing of everything up in a small package, as it were, properly labeled, to be taken at a certain time and not before, as if it would sicken or kill, if not reserved till the striking of a certain hour. For my part I want a little freedom, and I feel like guaranteeing that if real life and energy and enthusiastic devotion were put into the work, there would not be so much need for seeking after irreducible minima.

C. K.

GREEK LITERATURE

(Concluded from page 182.)

As the second salient characteristic of Greek literature I would posit its particularly close and intimate connection, down to about 300 B. C., with the everyday life of the Greeks themselves. Mr. R. R. Marrett, in his preface to a collection of very valuable lectures delivered in 1908, at Oxford, entitled *Anthropology and the Classics*, says: "To use the language of biology, whereas Greek Literature is congenial, Roman Literature is in large part acquired". No right understanding of either substance or form of Greek literature is possible to one who regards it in the light of modern literatures, that is, views it as consisting chiefly of works composed to be read to oneself. On the contrary, Greek prose-writer and Greek poet alike had in mind an *audience*, persons who listened; their appeal to the intelligence of those whose attention and approval they sought was made chiefly through spoken sounds, not directly through written symbols. Even in the time of Plato manuscripts of literary works were not abundant, and the possessor of one would ordinarily read it aloud to a circle of friends; nay, when reading to himself a Greek of Plato's time is likely to have read aloud. The poet, indeed, originally went farther than the prose-writer in his appeal to the ear; he made it not only through words in metrical arrangement, but largely through musical melody as

well. The epic poet, composing in the long and stately hexameter; the elegiac poet, using alternately the hexameter and the verse misnamed 'pentameter'; and the iambographer, using the trimeter, or verse of normally twelve syllables—these three seem to have designed their verses to be chanted or intoned rather than sung; but the whole character of this versification points to a mode of delivery very different from that of the usual spoken language. The verses of the lyric, or, to speak somewhat more technically, of the melic poets, were undoubtedly always sung to melodies in which the length of each note was accurately determined by the time-value of each syllable as used in actual speech. Our modern forms of verse seem to me to give an extremely false idea of the ancient meters. Unfortunately we cannot, with our present fragmentary knowledge of ancient music, safely go beyond this negative statement.

The successive types of Greek literature reflect faithfully the external conditions out of which they sprang. In some few cases we are fortunately able to trace the process of growth from almost the beginning to the full bloom; but not so in the earlier types. If we could follow out the earlier stages we should, I believe, find in the literature what has been found so often in the history of Greek art: a working-out of popular models previously long current in simpler forms. Unfortunately, the phrase 'mushroom growth' has acquired a by-meaning which makes it nearly incapable of use in a good sense; yet something very like that process must have gone on in the earlier centuries of Greek literature, as in many other literatures. As the spawn of the fungi permeates the soil in almost invisible filaments, to be suddenly roused to fertility by favoring conditions of moisture and atmosphere, so the subtle growths of popular songs and tales spring up into brilliant productiveness under the forcing of the master mind.

The earliest stage of Greek society revealed by the archaeologist is plainly of an aristocratic type. Chieftains great and small live in castles that are at once the palaces and the sanctuaries, and often the strongholds and places of refuge, of the various communities. The Homeric poems display a condition of society in which the rule of the nobles and princes is nearly absolute, though tempered by the advice of counselors, smaller chieftains, lesser nobles; but the man of low station in life hardly counts in war, except as rower of ships and desultory fighter in the field, and in peace not at all. Not only in the rare intervals of peace—petty warfare must have been nearly incessant—but in camp, bards sing the *κλέα ἀνδρῶν*, the glory of men, that is, their prowess in war, their strength, their cunning. But it is only the nobles that are thus glorified. The poems embodying these praises are of singularly